

# BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting

**DATE OF CONFERENCES:** February 6, 2014

**LOCATION OF CONFERENCE:** John O. Morton Building

**ATTENDED BY:**

**NHDOT**

Sheila Charles  
Victoria Chase  
Ron Crickard  
Michael Dugas  
Jill Edelmann  
Michael Hazlett  
Bob Juliano  
Bob Landry  
Marc Laurin  
Steve Liakos  
Christine Perron  
Trent Zanes

**Federal Highway  
Administration**

Jamie Sikora

**NHDHR**

Laura Black  
Edna Feighner

**Barker Architects**

Kyle Barker

**Dubois & King**

Scott Bourcier

**FHI**

Jill Barrett  
Stephanie Dyer-  
Carroll

**HDR**

Jim Murphy

**Henniker**

**Historical Society**

Peter Flynn

**Hoyle, Tanner**

Matthew Low  
Kimberly Peace

**Town of Exeter**

Julie Gilman  
Kevin Smart

**Town of Henniker**

Tom Yennerell

*(When viewing these minutes online, click on an attendee to send an e-mail)*

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**February 6, 2014**

**Exeter, 16045, X-A001(105)**

**Participants: Scott M. Bourcier, Dubois-King; Julie Gilman, Kevin Smart, Town of Exeter;  
Kyle Barker, Barker Associates**

Initial consultation on the engineering study for use of the Exeter B&M Luggage Building as a Welcome Center.

**1. Project Background**

- A. Scott Bourcier reported that the Town of Exeter has received a Federal Transportation Enhancement grant to construct a Regional Transportation Welcome Center to support the Exeter *Downeaster* Train Station. According to *Downeaster* ridership reports, annual ridership to the Exeter Station has grown approximately 216% since the

station's inception in 2002. Based on the Town's comparison of open-air platform train stations to enclosed facilities, train stations with an enclosed structure experience sustained or increased train ridership. To facilitate an enclosed structure for the Exeter *Downeaster* Train Station, the Town would like to rehabilitate the existing 1891 Boston & Maine (B&M) Railroad Depot Luggage building. Currently, the B&M Luggage building is privately owned, used as an apartment and the owner is acceptable to selling the luggage building.

- B. Scott noted that the project is currently in Study phase and is reviewing five (5) alternatives: No Build, Expansion of the Existing Platform, New Facility at New Location, Raze/Rebuild and Rehabilitation. At this stage of the study, the No Build, New Facility and Raze/Rebuild alternatives have been determined not to be feasible due to the respective not meeting the project goals; limited space to construct a new facility; and, the restrictions to raze the existing structure imposed by the US Department of Interior. The remaining two alternatives are being reviewed in more detail and is the purpose of this initial meeting.

## **2. Cultural Resources Review Comments**

- A. Scott distributed conceptual layout and elevations views of the Rehabilitation and Expansion alternatives to Cultural Resources and NHDHR. Scott acknowledged that although the plans for each alternative provided general information, the plans are satisfactory for the conceptual level necessary to complete the Study. Scott then requested conceptual review comments from the group.
- B. Laura Black expressed that the DHR's initial reaction was of great concern to see the Raze/Rebuilt alternative listed as an alternative as this is not an acceptable option under a TE project. It is understood that the alternative is no longer an option being considered. Scott responded that the goal was to ensure that the Study evaluated alternatives that someone from the public would inquire about.
- C. Laura commented that the general layout of the plans does not allow the opportunity to determine if the project is conforming to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation requirements; a pamphlet was distributed to DuBois & King. Laura commented that the project needs to develop a clear understanding of the interior and exterior materials, finishes, and design over time so as to best develop plans for rehabilitation that meets the Secretary's Standards. Jill Edelmann recommended that a Historical Structural Report be performed to establish a repair/replacement plan of the building features; Jill will provide a sample report to DuBois & King.
- D. Laura stated with respect to the Expansion alternative, similar requirements should be imposed as the Rehabilitation alternative. Adding buildings, platforms, or other infrastructure should consider the integrity of the surrounding resource. Laura reported that there are two National Register eligible resources: 1) the West End Railroad Industrial District; and 2) the Boston & Maine, Western Division.
- E. Scott accepted the comments and noted that it appears it would be more appropriate to perform these recommendations during the design phase of the project; once the

preferred alternative has been selected. Scott noted that he anticipates first submitting design plans to Cultural Resources for review/comment (and any subsequent submissions) prior to submitting Preliminary Plans to NHDOT – Bureau of Planning & Community Assistance. Coordination with NHDOT Project Manager, William Rose, prior to proceeding with this design approach.

**Loudon, 24941, X-A003(001)****Participants: Christine Perron, Trent Zanes, NHDOT**

Initial review to discuss a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) project. Trent Zanes provided an overview of the project. The project is part of the Highway Safety Improvement Program and is located on NH Route 106 at the intersection of Josiah Bartlett Road and Staniels Road. The project ties into the NH Route 106 Interim Corridor Study completed in 2012, which recommended widening and signal installation at the intersection. The intersection has had a number of accidents, including two fatalities.

Proposed work involves installing signals and widening to the east to accommodate additional northbound and southbound through lanes, and a northbound through/right turn lane. Project limits extend approximately 1500' to the south of the intersection and 1600' to the north. The existing southbound through/right turn lane would be retained. The proposed design accommodates 20-year design volumes. All work would be located in existing right-of-way. The project would improve the Level of Service of the intersection, and provide traffic on the side roads a safer way to turn onto NH Route 106. Due to the improved Level of Service, traffic queues should be substantially less. Josiah Bartlett Road currently has approximately 15 cars per hour. With the signals in place, there will likely only be one car at any given time in the queue on that road.

Jamie Sikora asked about the church shown on the plan. Christine Perron replied that it is a modern church. She added that the Jones House on Josiah Bartlett Road is eligible for the National Register.

Laura Black commented that her only concern had been regarding traffic queues on Josiah Bartlett Road. Given that this will not be an issue, she had no other concerns. She recommended a No Historic Properties Affected determination and J. Sikora concurred.

**Henniker, 15718, X-A003(046)****Participants: Matthew Low, Kimberly Peace, Hoyle, Tanner & Associates; Tom Yennerell, Town of Henniker; Peter Flynn, Henniker Historical Society; Steve Liakos, NHDOT**

Continued discussion on the Western Avenue Bridge over the Contoocook River project, following previous meetings on 4/8/2010, 5/10/2012, and 8/7/2013.

M. Low began by providing an overview of the project and cultural resource documentation which has been prepared and provided to date. This project has been presented at three prior meetings,

April 2010, May 2012, and August 2013. As a result of those earlier meetings, the following has occurred:

- Hoyle, Tanner submitted a Bridge Rehabilitation / Replacement Alternatives Evaluation to NHDOT Bureau of Environment and NHDHR for their review, detailing the alternatives evaluated resulting in the proposed replacement bridge versus rehabilitation, due to the extensive deterioration of the existing bridge.
- It has been determined that the project will impact the Western Avenue Bridge and the West Henniker Village Historic District, both of which are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The results of the Phase IB assessment identified one “area” located in the northwest quadrant of the project footprint that is significant from an archaeological perspective, near the site of a former mill / industrial site. Impacts to this area will be avoided and the area will be delineated and fenced off during construction to ensure the contractor does not impact the area. Hoyle, Tanner has revised the layout of the northwest wingwall from a splayed wall to a u-back configuration to further minimize the potential for excavation impacts to the sensitive area.
- A Cultural Resources Effect Memo was developed and executed on January 24, 2014 by NHDHR and FHWA. Per this Memo, as a result of the Project’s Adverse Effects to National Register-eligible resources, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will be drafted detailing mitigation.

The goal of the meeting was to discuss the development of an MOA and suitable mitigation measures. L. Black noted that mitigation did not have to be limited to the bridge or Historic District, but could include the archaeologically significant mill site. She also applauded the efforts of the project team for their efforts thus far.

Discussion ensued resulting in several potential mitigation measures which could be implemented. These potential measures will be refined during the development of the MOA by Hoyle, Tanner and the review of the MOA by NHDOT, SHPO and FHWA. Mitigation measures to be considered are as follows:

1. Development and installation of interpretive educational signage or kiosk at an appropriate location within the project area. Such signage could include discussion of the historic relevance of the Western Avenue Bridge, the significance of the Pratt Truss, and the development and significance of the Western Avenue Historic District, including the former mill site.
2. Advertisement of the bridge as for sale for redevelopment or partial re-use.
3. Development of either an educational tri-fold brochure, manual or online tutorial to increase awareness and educate town employees on the importance and types of preventative maintenance which can be used to prevent steel truss bridges from accelerated deterioration. Additional information on the newer truss designs could also be included, highlighting the ways the newer designs address the inherent flaws in previous designs. A draft will be provided to NHDHR for review and concurrence. Discussion of the potential extension of this effort included Hoyle, Tanner’s leading or developing a training module for NHDOT staff at a workshop. This information could be included on the Town of Henniker’s and/or NHDOT’s websites.

4. Development of an educational tri-fold brochure for distribution and inclusion on the Town's website providing information on the historic bridges within the Town, including the Western Avenue Bridge, the Patterson Hill Road Bridge, the Edna Dean Proctor Bridge, and the Henniker Covered Bridge. Information could include the history of the structures, the significance to the surrounding area, and any additional historical significance, such as information on Thomas and Caleb Pratt, initial designers of the Pratt truss.

In addition, it was noted that the MOA should include discussion of how the proposed new bridge has been designed to include truss members as partial replacement of the change in the view-scape, as requested by the Town; this design is more expensive than a non-truss bridge. It was also requested that the MOA include a note about fencing being used during construction to prevent disturbance to the mill site.

The next steps in the project will be to finalize the mitigation options and the MOA.

**New Castle-Rye, 16127, X-A001(146)**

**Participants: Jim Murphy, HDR; Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, Jill Barrett, Fitzgerald & Halliday; Victoria Chase, Bob Landry, Robert Juliano, Marc Laurin, NHDOT**

Continued discussion and update on the design of the replacement option for the New Castle-Rye Bridge and discussion on the TS&L report, draft Adverse Effect memo and possible mitigation items.

The third coordination meeting with SHPO on the New Castle-Rye Bridge Project was held on February 6, 2014 at NHDOT. Bob Landry with NHDOT began by reviewing the progress to date. He indicated that the Type, Size and Location Report was completed in January and that it recommended replacement of the bridge with a bascule span.

Jill Barrett with FHI then reviewed the public process on the project. She indicated that three Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Meetings had been held with near perfect attendance. In addition, two public meetings were held and had wide attendance from the residents of New Castle. The public expressed that they want a brief closure and that they prefer the replacement option.

Jim Murphy with HDR went on to outline the reasons for the selection of the Replacement Alternative. These include a shorter closure time, longer life span, and increased safety due to the 4-foot shoulders. In addition, the Replacement Alternative would be cost effective and would allow for a viewing area for pedestrians on the east side of the bridge. He indicated that the new bridge would have a similar profile and massing to the existing bridge and would maintain two bascule spans in the State of New Hampshire.

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll with FHI then reviewed the cultural resources findings to date. She stated that the Phase 1A Archaeological Survey had been completed and that it showed the site was primarily fill. Although the 1874 bridge abutments are located in the vicinity of the bridge, they would not be affected by the project. She also discussed the Scammell Memorandum of Agreement

(MOA), pointing out the discrepancy in the language between the MOA and a 1994 letter from the Commissioner of the NHDOT to the SHPO. She indicated that, while extensive rehabilitation and repairs had been done to the bridge since 1994, it is now posted at a 15 ton weight limit. She also indicated that NHDOT has determined that the project would have an adverse effect on the New Castle-Rye Bridge, however it would not adversely affect other historic properties in the vicinity of the bridge including the 1874 Bridge Abutments, the Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion and the Wentworth by the Sea Hotel.

Attendees then discussed the Determination of Effect, Memorandum of Agreement for the New Castle-Rye Bridge, and future steps. The comments included the following:

- J. Murphy asked whether NHDHR agreed with the Finding of Effect (submitted to NHDHR in mid-January). NHDHR stated that the TS&L Study was clear and that the argument for replacement is reasonable. However, before responding, NHDHR wants to clear up how to address commitment made in Scammell MOA. NHDHR indicated that they have reached out to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) for guidance on how to address requirements that are not being met. Without knowing what guidance ACHP will provide, NHDHR will not sign the Determination of Effect.
- J. Murphy stated that NHDOT feels the intent of the Scammell MOA has been met since extensive work was undertaken on the bridge over a 20 year timeframe. They feel that the deterioration of the bridge represents an exceptional circumstance under the Scammell MOA.
- J. Sikora with FHWA concurred, stating that the previous MOA was poorly worded and has broad, unrealistic stipulations. He stated that he would forward ACHP the maintenance records for the bridge for their reference. He indicated that a time had not yet been set to discuss the issue with the ACHP, but that he hoped it would be resolved within the next three weeks.
- J. Barrett shared that Jim Cerny with the New Castle Historical Society has researched the other bridges at the site and that he's especially excited about obtaining more information on the history of this bridge to supplement history of bridges at that location over the last few centuries. The New Castle Historical Society has suggested additional research and documentation of the bridge, as well as portable display panels on the history of the bridge, as potential options for mitigation. Other suggestions by NHDOT and NHDHR included an interpretive panel at the viewing area on the bridge, the development of a military context for the bridge, a monograph on the bridge designer, the marketing of the bridge, a website, or educational programming for junior and high students devoted to movable bridges. NHDHR said that any educational programming should be focused on history and not just on engineering.
- J. Murphy said that the consultant team would work with NHDOT to pull together a proposal for mitigation.
- J. Murphy also said that the consultant team and NHDOT are concerned about the timeline. They hope to complete the 30% design in July 2014 and advertise the construction in 2016.

Submitted by: Sheila Charles and Jill Edlmann, Cultural Resources

<http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/technicalservices/crmeetings.htm>